

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 02922 261853Z

62

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4271

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 2922

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJ: MRS GANDHI SETS STRINGENT TERMS FOR RECONCILIATION

REF: NEW DELHI 2750

1. IN A FEBRUARY SPEECH NEAR AURANGABAD, MAHARASHTRA, AND AT A MEETING WITH AGING GANDHIAN ACHARAYA BHAVE AT HIS BEARBY ASHRAM A FEW HOURS LATER, MRS GANDHI GAVE SOME ENCOURAGEMENT TO THOSE WORKING FOR A "RECONCILIATION" BETWEEN HERSELF AND THE OPPOSITION. IN HER ADDRESS, THE PRIME MINISTER FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE EMERGENCY PUBLICLY OUTLINED TERMS FOR RECONCILIATION.

SHE INSISTED THAT THE OPPOSITION OBSERVE DISCIPLINE AND ABANDON SATYAGRAHA ("SOUL FORCE" OR CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE) AND AGITATIONAL POLITICS. SHE CLAIMED THAT THE LATTER TACTICS WERE SUITABLE FOR USE AGAINST A FOREIGN COLONIAL POWER, BUT ARE UNSUITABLE FOR GOVERNMENT OF INDEPENDENT INDIA. SHE IS QUOTED IN THE PRESS AS STATING, "IF THESE THINGS (AN INTENTION TO ESCHEW SATYAGRAHA AND AGITATIONS) WERE MADE

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PAGE 02 NEW DE 02922 261853Z

CLEAR BY THE OPPOSITION PARTIES WE CAN THINK OF LIFTING

THE EMERGENCY. BUT THEY HAVE NOT CHANGED THEIR DECISION. IF THEY GET AN OPPORTUNITY, THEY WILL START AN AGITATION AGAIN."

2. SOON AFTER HER SPEECH, THE PRIME MINISTER FLEW TO A MEETING WITH ACHARYA BHAVE - AN ACTIVE SUPPORTER OF RECONCILIATION. THEY MET FOR AN HOUR. AFTERWARDS, MRS GANDHI REFUSED COMMENT TO THE PRESS. BHAVE MERELY PREDICTED THAT HIS "SATISFACTION" WITH THE TALKS WOULD EXTEND "INTO THE FUTURE."

3. COMMENT: SOME MIDDLE-LEVEL OPPOSITION LEADERS, SUCH AS THE JANATA (PEOPLES) FRONT LEADER IN PARLIAMENT, N.G. GORAY, ARE AMONG THE VARIED BAND OF POLITICIANS, SADHUS AND NEWSPAPERMEN WORKING OR BEATING THE DRUMS FOR RECONCILIATION AND A RETURN TO POLITICS. BUT MOST OF THE SENIOR OPPOSITION LEADERS ARE STILL IN JAIL OR ARE OUT ON CLOSELY MONITORED MEDICAL PAROLE. THESE TOP LEADERS HAVE SO FAR RESISTED MRS GANDHI'S ATTEMPTS TO NEGOTIATE WITH THEM SEPARATELY. SOME, SUCH AS MORARJI DESAI, REPORTEDLY ARE REFUSING TO NEGOTIATE UNTIL POLITICAL PRISONERS ARE RELEASED AND THE EMERGENCY RESCINDED. THEIR POSITION- AND MRS GANDHI'S INSISTENCE ON ASSURANCES THAT THE OPPOSITION WILL NOT REVERT TO PRE-EMERGENCY POLITICAL TACTICS STILL REPRESENT MAJOR OBSTACLES TO RECONCILIATION AT THIS TIME. OUR IMPRESSION FROM PERSONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE OPPOSITION IS THAT THEY ARE GREATLY DISHEARTENED AND DISSIPATED.  
SAXBE

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